

REMARKS

This Amendment is filed in response to the Office Action dated January 29, 2003, which has a shortened statutory period set to expire April 29, 2003.

In the present paper, Claims 3-4, 7, 14, 16-19, and 21 are amended. No new matter is added. Claims 1-2, 9-13, and 20 are cancelled.

Reconsideration and allowance of Claims 3-8 and 14-19 in view of the amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has objected to Claims 12 and 13 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but has indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Examiner has also noted that Claims 21-25 are allowable. Applicant notes with appreciation the acknowledgement by the Examiner of allowable subject matter in Claims 12-13 and 21-25.

Allowed Claim 21, which was added in the response to the previous Office Action, is Claim 12 rewritten in independent form, incorporating all the limitations of independent Claim 1 (from which Claim 12 depends) and intervening Claim 9. Claims 3-4, 7, 14, and 16-19 are amended to depend from Claim 21, so that Claims 3-8 and 14-19 all depend from Claim 21 and are therefore placed in condition for allowance.

Note that Claim 21 has also been amended to correct inadvertent capitalizations in the claim language. This amendment is purely to correct typographical errors. No new matter is added.

6

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103

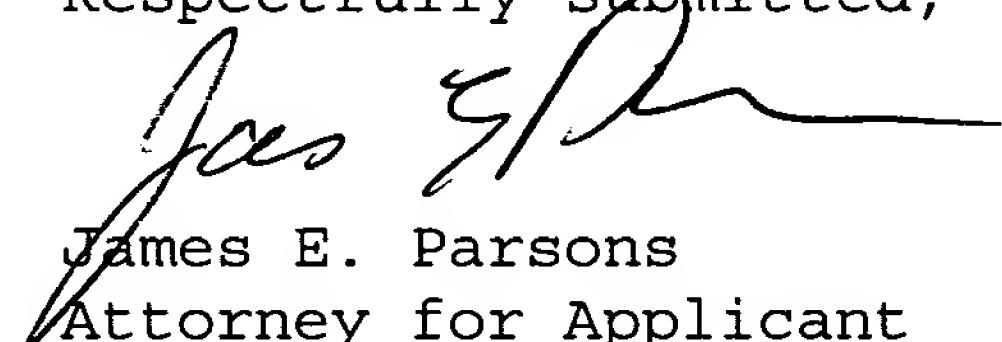
Claims 1-11 and 14-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). In light of the aforementioned amendments and cancellations to the claims, wherein all the pending claims are placed in condition for allowance in accordance with the Examiner's guidelines, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103 are rendered moot.

CONCLUSION

Claims 3-8, 14-19, and 21-25 are pending in the present Application. Reconsideration and allowance of Claims 3-8 and 14-19 is respectfully requested.

If there are any questions, please telephone the undersigned at (408) 451-5906 to expedite prosecution of this case.

Respectfully submitted,


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